

CLAIMS

1. A portable device for supporting a load in a cantilevered disposition relative to a generally horizontal extant structure, said extant horizontal structure having an edge, a top surface, and a bottom surface, comprising:
 - a platform portion;
 - a bracing portion for transferring the moment reaction caused by said cantilevered load to a segment of said bottom surface at a location removed from said edge in a direction generally opposite from said platform portion; and
 - at least one hanging bracket connecting said device to said upper surface of said extant structure adjacent to said edge;
 - wherein said hanging bracket is pivotably attached to said platform portion and to said bracing portion at a first axis generally parallel to said edge.
2. A device in accordance with Claim 1, wherein said platform portion extends from said extant structure in a generally horizontal disposition.
3. A device in accordance with Claim 1, wherein said platform portion extends from said extant structure in a generally sloped disposition.
4. A device in accordance with Claim 1, wherein said platform portion, said bracing portion, and said bracket are pivotably attached at a common said first axis and said device includes a stopping mechanism for maintaining said platform portion and said bracing portion in relative angular disposition.
5. A device in accordance with Claim 1, wherein said bracing portion is pivotably attached to said platform portion at said first axis and said bracket is pivotably attached to said bracing portion at a second axis parallel to and remote from said first axis and further wherein said device includes a stopping mechanism for maintaining said bracing portion and said platform portion in relative angular disposition.

6. A device in accordance with Claim 1, wherein said bracing portion also includes a mechanism for adjusting the relative angle of said platform relative to said extant structure and for accommodating diverse thicknesses of said extant horizontal structure.
7. A device in accordance with Claim 6 wherein said bracing portion includes said mechanism for adjusting said relative angle of said platform relative to said extant structure which said mechanism is hingedly attached to said platform portion and includes means for temporarily fixing said relative angle.
8. A device in accordance with Claim 6 wherein said mechanism for adjusting includes a series of alternative first axes for attaching said bracing portion.
9. A device in accordance with Claim 6 wherein said mechanism for adjusting includes a series of alternative pivot axes for attaching said hanging bracket.
10. A device in accordance with Claim 6 wherein said mechanism for adjusting includes at least one threaded stud having a bearing segment at its distal end.
11. A device in accordance with Claim 1, wherein said device includes a mechanism for temporally latching said platform portion to said bracing portion in a predetermined angular relationship.
12. A device in accordance with Claim 1, wherein said platform portion includes at least one lateral restraining member for containing said load.
13. A device in accordance with Claim 1, wherein said device also includes at least one flexible linear element attached to said device at only one end for the purpose of separating pages of a document wherein said document is at least part of said load.

14. A device in accordance with Claim 1, wherein said platform portion is attachable to said load.

15. A device in accordance with Claim 1, wherein said platform portion is an integral component of said load.

16. A method of supporting a load in a cantilevered disposition from an extant horizontal structure comprising:

- a. providing a device which includes at least a platform portion, a bracing portion, and a pivotably attached hanging bracket connected at a first axis;
- b. providing an extant horizontal structure having an edge, a top surface, and a bottom surface;
- c. extending a distal end of said hanging bracket away from said platform portion and said bracing portion;
- d. hanging said distal end of said hanging bracket from said top surface adjacent to said edge of said extant structure; and
- e. engaging said bracing portion with said bottom surface of said extant horizontal structure at an area remote from said edge so as to cause a moment couple resultant from said load applied to said platform portion to react against said extant structure in a downward direction at said top surface adjacent to said edge and in an upward direction at said bottom surface at said area remote from said edge.

17. A device for supporting a load in an cantilevered position relative to an extant horizontal shelf which includes:

a structure for supporting said load in a cantilevered disposition relative to said shelf which said structure comprises at least a platform portion at a first end and a bracing portion at a second end, said portions being divided by an axis generally parallel to an edge of said shelf; and

at least one hanging bracket pivotably attached to said structure at said axis and having a generally horizontal bearing segment at its distal end;

so that when said bearing segment is placed on a top surface of said shelf adjacent to said edge and said bracing portion is engaged with a bottom surface of said shelf at a location remote from said edge, said load is supported in said cantilevered position.

18. A device in accordance with Claim 17 wherein said bracing portion is pivotably attached to said platform portion and said structure includes a mechanism for temporarily maintaining said bracing portion in a fixed position relative to said pivotably attached said platform portion.

19. A device in accordance with Claim 16 wherein said load is attachable to said platform portion.

20. A device in accordance with Claim 16 wherein said load and said platform portion are components of an integrated structure.